

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A device for retaining a mercury source in the discharge space of a low-pressure discharge lamp, comprising
a holder comprising an inner space communicating with the discharge space~~[[,]] and the holder further comprising~~ a receiver opening for receiving a mercury source,

the holder includes resilient clamping means for clamping the holder in a generally tubular space segment of the discharge space,

the holder further includes resilient retaining means at least partially blocking the receiver opening, the retaining means adapted for allowing a passage of the mercury source in a direction towards the inner space of the holder, and blocking the movement of the mercury source through the receiver opening in a direction out of the holder.

2. (Original) The device of claim 1 in which the holder is made of a double coil, the ends of the coil being turned towards a central axis of the coil and acting as the retaining means.

3. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 in which the holder is made of a sheet material formed in an essentially cylindrical shape, the cylindrical holder comprises cylinder segments, the cylinder segments are separated with slits extending substantially parallel with a central axis of the cylinder, and the cylinder segments tilting radially outward and acting as the clamping means.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The device of claim ~~[[4]]~~ 3 in which ~~the retaining means is constituted by ends of cylinder segments folding radially inward and acting as the retaining means.~~

7. (Currently Amended) A device for retaining a mercury source in the discharge space of a low-pressure discharge lamp, comprising
a holder comprising an inner space communicating with the discharge space, the holder further comprising a receiver opening for receiving a mercury source,
resilient clamping means for clamping the holder in a generally tubular space segment of the discharge space,

resilient retaining means at least partially blocking the receiver opening, the retaining means adapted for allowing a passage of the mercury source in a direction towards the inner space of the holder, and blocking the movement of the mercury source through the receiver opening in a direction out of the holder, said holder is made of a sheet material formed in an essentially cylindrical shape, said holder comprises cylinder segments, the cylinder segments are separated with slits extending substantially parallel with a central axis of the cylinder, said ~~The device of claim 4 in which the holder is formed as a substantially frusto-conical barrel with a longitudinal slit formed substantially along a generatrix of the barrel, and the retaining means are formed as tongues extending radially inwards from an edge of the barrel.~~

8. (Original) The device of claim 1 in which a material of the device is selected from the group containing stainless steel, molybdenum, tungsten or nickel.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for retaining a mercury source at a predetermined location in a discharge space of a low-pressure discharge lamp, comprising the steps of :

inserting a retaining device into the discharge space, the retaining device comprising:

~~a holder comprising an inner space communicating with the discharge space and a receiver opening for receiving a mercury source,~~

resilient clamping means for clamping the ~~holder~~ retaining device in a generally tubular space segment of the discharge space, and

resilient retaining means at least partially blocking the receiver opening, the retaining means adapted for allowing a passage of the mercury source in a direction towards the inner space of the holder retaining device, and blocking the movement of the mercury source through the receiver opening in a direction out of the holder retaining device;

clamping the retaining device at the predetermined location; and
inserting the mercury source into the holder retaining device through the receiver opening and past the retaining means.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which the retaining device is inserted in the discharge space before evacuating the discharge space.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which the retaining device is pushed into an end of an exhaust tube, in a position where the receiver opening of the retaining device turns towards an outer end of the exhaust tube.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 in which the mercury source is inserted in the holder ~~of the~~ retaining device after evacuating the discharge space.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 in which the mercury source is pushed through the receiver opening with a pushing rod, whereby the mercury source is inserted in the retaining device.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, in which the discharge space is filled with a filling gas, and the mercury source is blown through the receiver opening with the filling gas.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11 in which the evacuated discharge space is sealed after inserting the mercury source.

16. (Original) A low-pressure discharge lamp comprising a discharge space, a discharge electrode and a mercury source located in a predetermined location

of the discharge space, in which the mercury source is retained in a retaining device, the retaining device comprising

a holder comprising an inner space communicating with the discharge space and a receiver opening for receiving a mercury source,

resilient clamping means for clamping the holder in a tubular space segment of the discharge space,

resilient retaining means at least partially blocking the receiver opening, the retaining means adapted for allowing a passage of the mercury source in a direction towards the inner space of the holder, and blocking the movement of the mercury source through the receiver opening in a direction out of the holder.

17. (Currently Amended) The discharge lamp of claim 16 in which the retaining device is located frictionally retained in an end of an exhaust tube, the exhaust tube connects to a stem supporting the discharge electrode.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The discharge lamp of claim 16 in which the mercury source is an amalgam.

20. (Original) The discharge lamp of claim 16 in which the mercury source is a pellet containing liquid mercury.

21. (New) A device for retaining a mercury source in a discharge space of a low-pressure discharge lamp, comprising:

a holder comprising an inner space communicating with the discharge space and a receiver opening for receiving a mercury source;

the holder includes resilient clamping members for clamping the holder in a tubular space segment of the discharge space; and

the holder further includes resilient retaining members at least partially blocking the receiver opening, the retaining members adapted for allowing a passage of the mercury source in a direction towards the inner space of the holder, and blocking the movement of the mercury source through the receiver opening in a direction out of the holder.

22. (New) A method for retaining a mercury source at a predetermined location in a discharge space of a low-pressure discharge lamp, comprising the steps of:

- inserting a retaining device into the discharge space, the retaining device comprising:
 - an inner space communicating with the discharge space and a receiver opening for receiving a mercury source,
 - resilient clamping members for clamping the retaining device in a tubular space segment of the discharge space, and
 - resilient retaining members at least partially blocking the receiver opening, the retaining members adapted for allowing a passage of the mercury source in a direction towards the inner space of the retaining device, and blocking the movement of the mercury source through the receiver opening in a direction out of the retaining device;
- clamping the retaining device at the predetermined location; and,
- inserting the mercury source into the retaining device through the receiver opening and past the retaining members.